

EVEN CURRENT PLAYS OCCASIONALLY NEED REVIVING

Naming the Big Three of the Stage for This Season

Attempt Made to Show Why the Work of Bernard, of Dittrichstein and of Miss Stevens Is Notable Among Characterizations of the Year.

By HEYWOOD BROWN.

Disclaiming any intention of speaking dogmatically about the most elusive of the arts, it is our opinion that three characters stand out in the present theatrical season. As the players parade by we are minded to doff our hat to the Abe Potash of Barney Bernard, the Katherine Knollys of Emily Stevens, and the Jean Paurel of Leo Dittrichstein.

In the typewritten pages of "Abe and Mawruss," "The Unchastened Woman" and "The Great Lover" is some portion of the stuff which makes these three figures stand out. The final touch of creation, the breath and the blood, is added by the actors. We have always doubted the ability or the truthfulness of the actor who said he felt his part. To play in that way is to muddle through. Inspiration is a poor substitute for method. Inspiration can hardly be expected to remain through six evening performances with matinees on Wednesdays, Saturdays and holidays. This inspiration is a volunteer. Method is a conscript.

The art of Bernard, of Dittrichstein and of Miss Stevens is rational. They do not feel their parts. On the contrary, they feel their audiences. Their own emotions are of much less concern to them than those of the folk out front. Close study of the acting of any one of the trio will reveal the fact that his work is superbly tricky, but the tricks do not show to the man who goes to the play once, and it is for him that the actor performs. Little variation is to be observed in the work of Bernard or Dittrichstein or Miss Stevens from night to night. An interpretation planned with care and for cause has no reason to blow hot and cold.

Fortunately, it is not possible suddenly to snatch forth some generality about the proper schooling of the actor from the case of our trio. Barney Bernard came to "Potash and Perlmutter" from vaudeville and burlesque. Leo Dittrichstein was graduated a good many years ago from the German Theatre in Irving Place. Emily Stevens was originally a pupil of Mrs. Fiske. And there you are, or rather there are Abe Potash, Jean Paurel and Katherine Knollys.

Still one rule may be set down. The advice of Mrs. Fiske to the aspiring Miss Stevens, according to the story, was, "Use more facial expression, Emily, and remember to keep your back to the audience."

There are certain limitations to the art of Leo Dittrichstein. Possibly that is why his Jean Paurel is such an extraordinarily fine piece of work. Many, indeed, not most, of the great acting parts have been tailored to fit some particular figure. Here in "The Great Lover" is a comedian before anything else. He is at his best when he is asked to stop just a shade short of the soul, and so Mr. Dittrichstein himself and the other authors of "The Great Lover" have done a part for their star which enables him to touch any number of moods but pursue not one to its uttermost boundaries. The emotions of Paurel are many, but none is deep.

First it was "The Affairs of Anatol," and now the letter scene in "The Great Lover" which convinces us that the straightest and quickest road to the heart is a cynical, and not a sentimental, journey.

Ned Wayburn is a showman. The revolving stage has been in the Century a good many years, but no audience ever saw it revolve before Wayburn introduced "Town Topics."

A new Charlie Chaplin film is to be produced this week, and we are very much afraid that we are going to like it.

Once it was the newspaper reporter who received the harshest treatment from the dramatists, but now unquestionably no man is so much maligned as the minister. Every clergyman whom we have seen on the stage this season has been a hypocrite, except one, who was mercifully pictured as a fool. Some day a dramatist will put a real preacher on the stage, but it will take a long course of training to make the audiences accept him.

Stay away from America and return in twenty years, and you will find that natives of Ohio and Indiana and Oregon employing gestures as frequently and as vehemently as the French or the Italians. Having observed the mark which melodrama has left upon the language, we are confident that the motion pictures will teach an undemonstrative people that the hands may also be used for conversation. We know that there are already ever so many young men who walk like Charlie Chaplin, but we would like to know whether the girls are not beginning to make love like Mary Pickford or Seena Owen.

Those persons who do not think there is any intelligent public in New York City may be surprised to learn that the Bandbox Theatre is actually turning away prospective spectators.

THEATRE FRANCAIS OPENS

Begins Season at the Berkeley Tomorrow Night.

With "Les Marionnettes" as the attraction, the third season of the Theatre Francais in New York will begin tomorrow night at the Berkeley Lyceum, Forty-fourth Street. The interior of the Berkeley has been entirely remodelled, it is announced, and he who enters the theatre to-morrow evening will find himself in Paris—with Broadway far away.

Lucien Bonheur continues as the director. The list of patronesses and subscribers is long, and apparently guarantees a successful season. A new play, it is stated, will be put on every Tuesday night throughout the season. Matinees will be played Thursdays and Saturdays.

Andree Mery, new leading woman, has played for many years at the Odéon, in Paris. Claude Benedict will again be in the company.

HARRY LAUDER THIS WEEK

Scotch Comedian at Forty-fourth Street Theatre.

Harry Lauder, his burr as thick as ever, is back in the United States. In fact, he is in New York. Doubters may verify the fact at the Forty-fourth Street Theatre this week with Francis X. Bushman and Beverly Bayne. In "Pennington's Choice," to follow, a double vaudeville programme will be given on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Plaza Theatre.

Harold Lockwood and May Allison, in "The End of the Road," will be the feature picture at the Plaza Theatre the first half of the week with Francis X. Bushman and Beverly Bayne. In "Pennington's Choice," to follow, a double vaudeville programme will be given on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Screen Club Ball.

The annual ball of the Screen Club will occur at the Hotel Astor next Saturday evening, and it is expected that all the film stars in the East will be present. King Baggot is in charge of the affair, and Billy Quirk, president of the club, will lead the grand march with a film actress who has not yet been chosen.

REICHER'S SEASON STARTS AT GARDEN

Bjornson Comedy to Have First American Presentation.

Emanuel Reicher, a notable dramatic figure in Germany and already favorably known in this country through his short season in New York last year, has taken the Garden Theatre for the entire season and will open it Tuesday night with Bjornstjerne Bjornson's comedy, "When the Young Vines Bloom."

The play will be performed each evening for the balance of the week. "When the Young Vines Bloom" was the last play written by the Norwegian dramatist and is the best of his comedies to be presented in this country. In fact, there have been but few of Bjornson's plays seen here. Mrs. Patrick Campbell's production of "Beyond Human Power" being the most notable. In "When the Young Vines Bloom" Mr. Reicher will make his first appearance in a comedy role in English, and will also play for the first time in this country with his daughter, Hedwig Reicher, who is already well known here. Others in the company will be Bertha Mann, Emma Lascelles, Louise Berggreen, Alberta Gallatin, Rosalie Nathan, Alice Martin, Helen May, Katherine Herbert, Rupert Harvey, Augustin Duncan, John Langrange, Hugh Powell and John Wray.

IRVIN COBB STORIES REACH THE STAGE

"Back Home" at Cohan Theatre To-morrow.

Cobb's stories in the "Saturday Evening Post"—those in which Judge Priest is the central figure—have been read by millions, and their ultimate arrival on the stage was inevitable. Kentucky life, as seen by Cobb, will be exhibited at George Cohan's Theatre to-morrow evening, with the Selwyns as the power behind the coin. Bayard Veller, who wrote "Within



FRED GOODROW, In "Back Home."

the Law," has constructed the play, and it has been given the title "Back Home." In dramatic form it is said to retain everything that Cobb put into the stories, which was considerable.

John W. Cope, whose last New York appearance was in the role of the quiet father in "It Pays to Advertise," will play Judge Priest. Willie P. Sweatnam will be seen as Jeff, and others in the cast will be Phoebe Foster, Sydney Booth, Richards Hale, Theodore Hamilton, Miriam Doyle, Clifford Stark, Fred Goodnow, Robert Middlemas, Charles B. Wells and John Warnick.

Cabaret at Reisenweber's.

"Hohel Tanzt Walzer," the latest Viennese comic opera hit, will start its third week at the German Irving Place Theatre, Margate Christians, Emmy Nicklas, Hans Unterkircher and Angelo Lippich are heading the excellent cast.



Emily Stevens in "The Unchastened Woman," 39th St. Ethel Barrymore in "Our Mrs. McChesney," Lyceum. Eva Swain who will be seen in "Tit-For-Tat."

"WILD BIRDS" TO BE SEEN

Neighborhood Playhouse Will Make Its First Production To-night.

To-night at the Neighborhood Playhouse, 466 Grand Street, the Neighborhood Players will be seen in their first production of the season, "Wild Birds," a romantic folk-play in three acts. The author, Violet Pearn, is connected with the Bristol Repertory Theatre, where this play has already been produced, but her work is almost unknown in this country, and the Neighborhood Players' performance will be the first presentation of the play in America. The play reflects very sympathetically the spirit of wild beauty and picturesque mystery of the Devonshire moors.

Benefit for Blue Cross.

A benefit performance for the Blue Cross Fund, which has as its object the relief of wounded war horses, will be given at the Bandbox Theatre to-morrow night. "Interior" and "Helena's Husband" will be given by the Washington Square Players, and others who will appear will be Isabel Rodriguez, Spanish dancer; Lydia Lopokova, Russian dancer, and Lillian Emerson. Tickets may be obtained from Miss Beatrice Manger, 607 Park Avenue.

Irving Place Bill Unchanged.

"Hohel Tanzt Walzer," the latest Viennese comic opera hit, will start its third week at the German Irving Place Theatre, Margate Christians, Emmy Nicklas, Hans Unterkircher and Angelo Lippich are heading the excellent cast.

Cabaret at Reisenweber's.

"Full of Speed," at Reisenweber's restaurant, has undergone a change of principals, and is again becoming a success. Natalie and Ferrari are the dancers, and Paul Frawley and Stuart E. Roberts are among the principals. The chorus numbers twelve.

Transforming the Hippodrome Stage Into a Frozen Lake.

The ice spectacle entitled "Flirting at St. Moritz," which closes "Hip, Hip, Hooray" at the Hippodrome, reveals the mechanical genius of Charles Dillingham. Varied uses have been made of the immense pool in the Hippodrome. Always until this present season these uses have been associated with the employment of water in some form. "Hip, Hip, Hooray" marks the first time that this pool has been frozen solid and used for an illustration on the stage of a winter scene.

For the first time in the history of stage effects an immense pool, 95 by 45 feet in size and completely filling every inch of the largest stage in the world, is employed in a skating scene of exquisite beauty. The forestage, 95 by 45 feet, is cut into sections approximately 12 by 6 feet. These sections rest on a framework of iron girders which in turn are supported by a series of mammoth pistons, four in number. When water spectacles were used as a part of the entertainment, this forestage was removed in sections and the structure lowered on its pistons to whatever depth was necessary for the aquatic spectacle. To make the ice stage possible, the iron structure has been lowered to a depth of only eighteen inches. Upon this framework is placed a system of pipes through which is run brine and ammonia; a plant technically known as the compressor system. The pipes run in series about 2 1/2 inches apart, and resemble more than anything else giant steam radiators. Sixteen thousand feet of 1 1/2-inch pipe are necessary for the Hippodrome ice-making machine. This shallow tank, which holds the pipes, is lined with a layer of cork four inches thick. Cork is also used on the bottom of the sections of the

forestage. This, acting as a non-conductor, keeps the performers from getting cold feet during the acts of the play preceding the ice ballet.

The lake, as it is now used for the expert skaters, was formed the latter part of the summer. First the system was tested, the pipes lowered to a temperature of about ten degrees and water turned on the pipes to a depth of six inches. It took sixty-five hours to freeze Lake Moritz. But once frozen the lake has given little trouble and the engineers promise that it will last until long after the skating months have passed. To keep the ice in its present state it is necessary to run the plant for about two hours after the matinee each day and for about eight hours each night. It is estimated that if the plant was shut down the lake would not melt for twenty-four hours.

As those who have seen the spectacle at the Hippodrome know, the second act closes at the San Francisco Fair and the third act opens with the lake in Switzerland. During the intermission, the forestage is taken up in sections and hurriedly carted down runways to the regions under the playhouse. The ice caretakers then go over the surface with brushes to see that nothing is left on the surface of the ice, and the premiere skater and her two hundred ice entertainers having tested their skates, the curtain is drawn aside on the lovely scene.

Following each performance, before the stage is relaid for the coming entertainment, a scraper machine is run over the ice, taking off about one-eighth of an inch. This is carted off and the surface is then treated to a fine spray of hot water. When the hot water has melted the ice to a perfectly level surface, the plant is started to work and a new coat of about one-eighth of an inch refrozen.

SECOND ELMENDORF TALK

Holland the Theme of Travelogue at Carnegie Hall To-night.

Holland—the neutral Holland before it was under the obligation of announcing its neutrality—will be the subject of Dwight Elmendorf's illustrated travel talk at Carnegie Hall to-night. The Holland talk is the second of the series and will be repeated to-morrow afternoon.

One of the features of the travelogue will be the lecturer's reproductions of several masterpieces of Dutch art. Burton Holmes will begin a fall series at the Candler Theatre a week from to-night. His first topic will be "West Point and the Yellowstone," and this will be repeated Monday afternoon.

Loew's American Roof.

Cecil Weston and Louise Leon, "the personality girls," will top the bill at Loew's American Roof for the entire week. Other acts during the first three days will be Jarro, comedy magician; Dorothy Burton & Co., in "The Baby"; Henry Frey, German comedian; Jessie Keller and Weir, the Parsleys, Bell and Caron and the Saxo Sextet. The supporting bill during the last half of the week will embrace Lewis and Norton, Chumley Monroe and company, in "A Business Proposal"; Hibbert and Mason, Weber and Day, the musical chef; Klutzing's animals, Crawford and his "fashion girls," and the Leo Zarrel Trio.

Gamut Club Plays To-night.

The Gamut Club, an organization of professional actresses, will give its first programme of the year at the club-house, 69 West Forty-sixth Street, to-night. Three plays—"Manners," "The Woman Across the Way" and "Fog Wolfington's Pearls"—will be staged. Among those who will appear will be Olive Oliver, John O'Brien, Minnie Dupree, Gertrude Dallas, Beatrice Golden and Amelia Gardner.

Where and Why Plays of the Season Continue

"The Great Lover" Gives Dittrichstein One of the Best Parts Which He Has Ever Had in His Long and Brilliant Career.

By HEYWOOD BROWN.

Comedies.

"The Great Lover," at the Longacre Theatre, is a play about the life which may or may not be lived within the walls of an opera house. The play has atmosphere, humor and pathos, and Leo Dittrichstein gives the best performance of a career which has contained much that was notable. Dittrichstein, Frederic and Fanny Hatton are the authors of this altogether delightful entertainment.

"The Liar," at the Playhouse, is a revival of one of the most skillful of the comedies of Henry Arthur Jones. The play is not entirely in the manner of our present-day drama, but it contains much that is vital, and the piece, on the whole, is well done. Miss Grace George and Conway Tearle are seen to particular advantage. "The Liar" is a comedy of intrigue.

"The Angel in the House," at the Fulton Theatre, contains flashes of brilliant dialogue and Arnold Daly is seen at some moments at his exceedingly excellent best, but the play is excessively talky and undramatic and rather drearily decadent in spirit. "The Angel in the House" is a satire of modern phases of aestheticism.

"Hobson's Choice," at the Comedy Theatre, is a broadly humorous picture of life in Lancashire. The play is an engagingly truthful and the acting is in the very best manner of the realistic school. Molly Pearson and Whitford Kane may be singled out for particular mention, but on the whole the merit of the acting lies in the team work rather than in the brilliance of one or two. The play might be described as "Man and Superman" set into the dialect of Lancashire. Its humor is concerned with the vagaries of the small tradesman. The marriage of Maggie is made the subject of a little rather broad banter, but it is healthy humor and nobody will be the worse for it. Harold Brighouse is the author of the play.

"The Unchastened Woman," at the Thirty-ninth Street Theatre, is a brilliant dramatic exercise couched in the terms of the theatre rather than of life. It has a compelling interest through every moment of the performance on account of its excellent craftsmanship and its exceptionally good acting. Emily Stevens, in fact, does almost all the best acting New York has seen this season, and all in all we see no reason yet to change our opinion that "The Unchastened Woman" is the most satisfactory dramatic entertainment of the season.

"The Boomerang," at the Balcony, is light comedy of an exceedingly diverting type. A thoroughly good-humored and skilfully devised play is acted by cast of unusual merit. Martha Hadman, Arthur Byron and Wallace Edinger play brilliantly. "The Boomerang" concerns the downfall of a man who has seduced a woman, and the play may be recommended to all classes of theatregoers and carry a star of special recommendation to mixed doubles.

"Abe and Mawruss," at the Lyric Theatre, is a continuation of the adventures of Potash and Perlmutter. Strangely enough, the second play is better than the first. There are two acts set together with a considerable amount of technical skill, but the third act and the happy ending are not quite so happy. As Abe Potash, Barney Bernard gives a remarkably fine performance, and the other members of the cast set a high standard.

"Our Mrs. McChesney," at the Lyceum, is a much less skillful use of short story characters for the stage. Edna Ferber's well known heroine is impersonated by Miss Ethel Barrymore with great skill, but Miss Barrymore is not exactly the type which has been pictured in the stories. The play contains a number of amusing lines, much good characterization, and an excellent first act laid in a small town hotel, but the episodic nature of the play becomes more and more apparent as the piece progresses, and the play therefore fails to hold the interest throughout.

"Rolling Stones," at the Harris, is a hustling play about adventure in the business world. Charles Ruggles does some amusing farce comedy acting in the chief role of Mr. Selwyn's pleasant play.

"The Two Virtues," at the Booth, brings Edward Sothern back to the stage in a polite and polished comedy by Sutro. The play is talky, but it wit tones for this, and the finished acting of Mr. Sothern is heightened by the support of a first rate company.

"Young America," at the Gaiety, is a slight but absorbing play about a boy and his dog, by Fred Ballard. The play has one of the few which makes an attempt to deal with some phase of American life outside New York City.



JASPER.

Its treatment of the subject of juvenile delinquency is a bit sketchy. A good company, including a remarkable dog, helps to bring out the abundant humor of the play.

"Quinn's," at the Maxine Elliott, is a charming though plodding character play in which Frederick Ross gives an agreeable performance as an antique dealer.

Farces.

"Fair and Warmer," at the Eltinge, is as amusing a play as New York has seen in many seasons. Avery Hopwood

has taken familiar material and made it sparkle through the wit of his lines and his deft handling of the technical problems of farce writing. "The Great Lover," played by Kennedy and John Cumberland is particularly have exactly the right touch.

Problem Plays.

"The Eternal Magdalen," at the Forty-eighth Street Theatre, is an overly sentimental play which serves to once pity and a little more—far from the best of the underworld. A somewhat acute civic problem is dealt with in terms of sentiment by the author, who makes his pity take the concrete form of a plea for a segregated district. The play is a mixture of realism and poetic drama. Julia Arthur, who acts the Eternal Magdalen, brings a good deal of dignity to the role.

"Common Clay," at the Republic, is a loud, crude and powerful play which proves that bad persons are bad and good ones good. A conventional story is framed in such a way as to give a cast of prominent players an opportunity for some showy work. John Mason, Jane Cowell and Ned Whytall are prominent in the roles. The popular appeal of the drama cannot be denied, as it has been up to date to the biggest attraction in New York among dramatic entertainments. The author is Cleve Kinkaid, and the play, which was written in George Fennel Baker's English 47 at Harvard, won't John Craig prize.

Melodramas.

"Under Fire," at the Hudson, is a dashing play about the great war written in the familiar romantic vein which associates martial valor and heart interest. William Courtenay saves face for the heroine and the king. He is aided by an excellent cast, in which Frank Craven is conspicuous as a comic newspaper man.

"The House of Glass," at the Candler, is a play about the police and their long memories. Mary Ryan is the heroine, with a Sing Sing past which rises up to her great distress in the end and every act of the play. The popular emotional actress spends an evening harrowing evening that will make the audience weep for the heroine and all the rest of it, but her tears dried just before the final curtain through the medium of a patios from the Governor. Max Martin, a former newspaper man, is the author of the play, and his knowledge of police and crooks is used to good advantage in sketching his characters.

"Secret Service," at the Empire, brings William Gillette back to the stage in a scenario of popular incidents about the Civil War. The distinguished actor has lost little of his dash and the play has stood the test of time remarkably well.

One-Act Plays.

The Washington Square Players give their new bill of comparative comedies at the Bandbox Theatre on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, while on Friday and Saturday matinee and evening the old bill is on. The latest bill contains four comedies all light, they are "Ritzy" by Alfred de Musset; "The Honorable Lover," by Robert Bracco; "Litterature," by Arthur Schnitzler; and "Overtones," by Alice Gertrude. The old bill, made up of "Helena's Husband," Mackaye's "The Antick" and White's "Fire and Water." Both bills are decidedly worth seeing. The new will be adorned by some of the most beautiful acts which the Bandbox is known.

Musical Plays.

"Around the Man," at the New Amsterdam, is a musical comedy of a high order. Its music is pleasant to the ear, and its story is striking, which New York has seen Joseph Urban has outdone himself in the present production. The play serves to introduce Elsie Alder, a charming new prima donna from Germany, where we got our bombs. Georgia O'Rourke shines in one of the character parts with which a musical comedy has been endowed for several seasons. C. M. S. McEllean is responsible for the book and the lyrics and Herman Finck wrote the music.

"Hip-Hip-Hooray," at the Hippodrome, is a bountiful entertainment which is done with tact and taste. It dwarfs everything else in size, but its merits do not end with mere magnitude. It contains much that is amusing, much that is charming, and some degree of beauty. Among the features are Sousa's band, Charlotte and a wonderful ice ballet, Orville Harold and Nat Willis.

"The Princess Pat," at the Cort Theatre, is chiefly distinguished by Victor Herbert's tuneful music and by the beautiful voice and pleasing personality of Eleanor Painter. Miss Painter not only sings in agreeable fashion, but acts with spirit, and dances delightfully. She is supported by a good cast. Sam B. Hart is extremely amusing in a novel comic role.

"Chin-Chin," at the Globe, is the perennially popular musical comedy which has utilized such good actors as the talents of Montgomery and Stone. An attractive chorus lends a hand in making the show a success.

"Alone at Last," at the Shubert, is a beautiful show by Frank LaHar. The music is well sung, but the book is a little dull.

"Town Topics," at the Century, is a brisk and breezy. It is a vaudeville show rather than a revue, but it is done with a spirit and a snap hardly encountered in the two-day shows. Among the best of the specialists in the show are Will Rogers, Fred Friganzza, Peter Page, Bert Leslie and Mabel Elaine.

"The Blue Paradise," at the Casino, is an amusing comic opera with some pleasant musical numbers. Cecil Lee and Cleo Mayfield are responsible for most of the gaiety.

"The Ziegfeld Midnight Frolic," at the New Amsterdam Roof, is a light entertainment cleverly devised to suit the taste of after-theatre patrons.

Amperans to Give Play.

The Amperans, Inc., a semi-professional dramatic club, which has existed in existence more than twenty years and has presented more than forty plays, will present "The Master Maker" at Ebbings' Casino next evening. The play is a farce by Bert Swears.